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THE BAPTIST

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## Miss. couple counts service as 'privilege'

By Wally Poor  
FMB Americas Correspondent

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay — He has a Ph.D. in anatomy and has trained doctors in Spain and Uruguay in brain surgery.

She has an operatic-quality voice and has presented concerts before the wife of the president of Uruguay.

So why are Mississippians John and Kathy McNair leading a weekly Bible study in a low income area of Montevideo, where Afro-Brazilian spiritism is the main religion, and why do they love it?

"I'm so glad the Lord gave us this privilege at this point in our lives," said John, a Magee native and graduate of William Carey College in Hattiesburg.

His anatomy doctorate was received from the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, where he was also a faculty member.

Kathy is a Picayune native who holds music degrees from William Carey College (bachelor) and Mississippi College in Clinton (masters).

The "privilege" to which John referred is leading a Bible study among a group of people emerging from Macumba — a blend of African and Brazilian spiritism.

The study is held in the home of Augusto and Elida Tonelli, the parents of Maria Rios.

Maria and her husband Oscar began by working for the McNairs years ago. The missionaries led them to the Lord and the couple began to be concerned about their relatives, most of whom were in Macumba — some even leading the cult's services.

Oscar and Maria were rebuffed and even persecuted by their relatives. Slowly, their own changed lives had an impact and their relatives began to show interest in coming to the church where Oscar

and Maria, with the McNairs' training, have become leaders.

Finally, Maria's mother accepted Christ and asked if someone could come to her neighborhood to lead a Bible study.

John and Kathy responded. The house where they meet has a large enough living/dining area to accommodate 15 to 20 people each week.

Inside, the fellowship is warm. With John leading and Kathy playing an electronic organ, singing is spirited.

As people appear they are not just welcomed but hugged. John leads in a Bible study aimed at helping the new believers grow.

"This is our prayer concern for this group, that they remain true to the Lord and grow in Him," John said.

Outside, it is not just dark because the barrio (neighborhood) has scant public lighting. The spiritual darkness of the area is palpable.

"You can feel the spiritual oppression when you go into the neighborhood," John said.

The Bible study, located in Barrio Municipal or Ellauri, has led to the winning of other people in another nearby neighborhood, Barrio Lavalleja.

There is now a nucleus of eight believers there. They would like the McNairs to start



IN-HOUSE WORSHIP — Mississippi missionaries John (right) and Kathy McNair (second from right) begin a home Bible study with a time of praise. John is using a percussion instrument, and Kathy is playing a portable electronic organ. (FMB photo by Betty Poor)

another Bible study there.

"We'll have to arrange to have the study there during the daylight hours," John conceded. "It's like a no-mans' land. There are no streets as such."

At present, some of those in the Bible study take the bus to Pocitos to the Baptist church there, but the McNairs dream of the day when Barrio Ellauri will have its own meeting place. It will be tough.

Being involved in Barrio Ellauri has also had an impact on another area of the McNairs' work. John serves as the language and orientation director for new Southern Baptist missionaries coming to Uruguay.

After starting his missionary career working with university students and teaching in the University of Uruguay's Medical School, John realizes the need for newly arriving missionaries to be able to relate to all strata of Uruguayan society.

"I realize more and more the importance of seeing Uruguay, of knowing Uruguay, and being able to relate and speak the language of all these different levels.

"They need to be able to speak a language that is not just an ecclesiastical language. We live in a real world here," he said.

The McNairs have also served as missionaries to India and Spain.

### Looking back

#### 10 years ago

Southern Baptist foreign missionary Jerry Rankin of Clinton is named area director for Southern Asia and the Pacific by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Rankin and his wife Bobbye, also a Mississippian, became missionaries in 1970.

#### 20 years ago

Thirty-eight children, youth, adults — and one grandmother — from Yale Street Church, Cleveland, take part in a bike-a-thon that helps raise a record \$1,376.24 for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions. The church's goal was \$450.

#### 50 years ago

The Sunday School at Foxworth Church, Foxworth, has shown remarkable growth the last 12 months. Enrollment the first Sunday in May 1946 was 150 with an attendance of 73. The first Sunday in May 1947 the enrollment is 257 with an attendance of 141.

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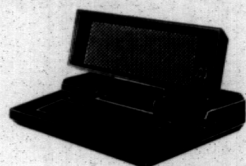
### America as mission field

Denton Lotz, general secretary for the Baptist World Alliance, preached recently at Global Baptist Mission Church, the fastest growing church in Korea. Pastor Daniel Lee attributes the church's rapid growth to prayer and expository preaching. Started seven years ago as a small fellowship, the church now has more than 7,000 members. They meet in a rented office building and have five worship services every Sunday.

Many among the members of the church are medical doctors who "... are concerned about the lack of Christian faith in many universities in the United States," Lotz said. "Some are seriously responding to invitations to be missionaries for Christ in secular universities (in the U.S.)."



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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# Give the next generation a head start

**M**ay is graduation month in these parts. Everyone from kindergartners to Ph.D. candidates will be receiving their diplomas, but most people would agree that May really belongs to high school graduates.

There's something mystical about finishing high school. Maybe it's because the event has long been considered the final scene on the stage of childhood and the opening curtain on adult life. They are actually graduating to adulthood. In fact, most young people become legal adults during their high school graduation year.

Dreams and goals send lifelong friends in separate directions, never to be close again. Parents confront a defining moment in their lives. Younger siblings typically can't wait for the "old dude" to be out of the house, but more than a few feel a deep sense of personal loss.

The graduates themselves encounter an almost infinite range of thoughts and emotions. Many can't wait to dive into the deep end of the world's pool, while others are afraid to dip a toe in the shallow end.

Whatever directions they choose in life, May is their month. They've earned it. They deserve it. Let's let them have it. After all, we adults know it will be over soon enough.

As the pagan cultural mythologies of our day descend like damp fog on these youngest of adults, it is important that they be prepared for what they will surely encounter.

For example, as difficult as this is to understand, they need to know there are entire industries in America seeking to profit from their ruin.

Prominent members of this evil cartel include the alcohol and gambling industries. There is no reason why this poison

(yes, alcohol is a poison) should be marketed for casual human consumption, and there is no reason why the chance and trickery now known as "gaming" should be promoted as good, clean, civic fun.

The only motivation is love of money — profit at the expense of humanity. Sadly, too many of our graduating seniors have already experienced the dark underbellies of these two all-consuming beasts in their own lives and the lives of their loved ones.

Even more difficult to explain to these new adults is why their government at virtually every level is willingly complicit in these greedy, craven enterprises.

Mississippi Baptists should be aware that every drop of liquor in this state starts out under ownership of the State of Mississippi — the only wholesaler of liquor allowed under state law.

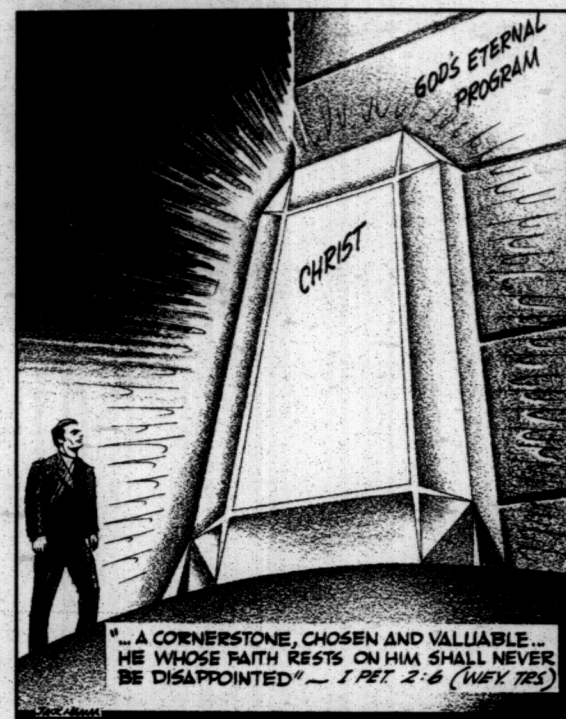
That means this great destroyer of individuals and families is being sold on your behalf, with your imprimatur. Are you comfortable with that?

These young adults also need to know they will feel overwhelming pressure to conform to modern culture, without adequate information on the risks and consequences of inappropriate behavior as presented in our ubiquitous entertainment medium.

If they believe "protected sex" of any kind really protects them, they are hurtling toward tragedy. Yet, that is the message promoted through television and movies.

If they believe recreational use of illegal drugs can be controlled — a message repeated again and again on television and in movies — they are in for a lifetime of insatiable craving.

If they believe God's natural order of human relations can be trivialized as they are on television every night of the week, they're in for a shock.



We Christian adults should have been about the business all along of preparing our children for the realities of life, but it's never too late.

The place to begin is always with Jesus. If these graduates possess the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives, the siren call of the world will be greatly diminished in their ears as they enter adulthood.

Don't allow a young person to pass through your life without sharing Jesus. Don't allow *anyone* to pass through your life without sharing Jesus.

Show them how to make Christ the cornerstone of their lives.

The next generation is literally hanging in the balance.

Let's give them a head start!

## GUEST OPINION:

### Healing America

By Sidney Davis, pastor  
Maranatha Church, Mt. Olive



*If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. (II Chron. 7:14)*

**F**or months I have been praying that God would send revival to our churches, our communities, and our nation.

The above text is a revival text. R.G. Lee called it "God's recipe for revival."

The last part of the verse says, "...I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

"I will forgive their sin," implies that sin has caused a separation between man and God. Sin is the major problem.

"I will heal their land," really explains what revival is and how it reaches out everywhere. Not only in revival is there forgiveness for the people of God, but the whole country is affected. There is spiritual healing that goes through the land.

The problems of America are sin problems. They are moral problems. They are problems which only God can solve.

We make a serious mistake if we look for some humanistic solution to our ills. If we look to government rather than God or if we look to man rather than the Holy Spirit, then we can be sure that our problems will

continue and get worse.

God's solution to a sick society is revival. Revival works from within. It produces moral and spiritual change that affects the whole country. When revival comes, even those who refuse to be saved are more careful and less open with their sins.

Revival from God is a powerful thing. The Southern Baptist Convention, along with other groups, has called for a boycott of Disney Enterprises and I certainly agree with this effort, but revival from God will do more to change the face of America than all the boycotts ever devised.

God says, "...I will heal their land." Revival would do more to change the attitude of America toward abortion, gambling, prostitution, drugs, drunkenness, violence, sexual sin, and perversion than anything man can devise.

God says, "...I will forgive their sin. I will heal their land." God will do this!

What about you and me? What are we to do? The Bible has the answer.

The Book of Acts describes a church that was so moved and empowered by the Holy Spirit that the whole world was affected. The early disciples were described as "these who have turned the world upside down have come here also." (Acts 17:6).

Wouldn't you love to live in a community that has been turned upside down by God? I would call that revival.

In Acts there seems to be a pattern for the healing of the land. This pattern has five definite steps:

◆ **Prayer.** We see this throughout Acts. We see this before the Day of Pentecost. For ten days the disciples met in the Upper Room and prayed in one

accord. They waited on the Lord.

◆ **The Holy Spirit.** He is not only the second person of the Trinity, he also is the second person in this pattern. The Holy Spirit came to do a work that only he could do.

◆ **Preaching the Word.** You see it throughout Acts. Preaching of the Word is vital in the changing of a nation or a people.

◆ **Conviction of sin.** The people were convicted in their hearts. They were convicted of their sins and cried out, "...what must we do?" The answer was always "repent", and a time of refreshing will come.

◆ **Conversion.** Conversion is change. People are changed! Attitudes are changed! Lives are changed! Communities are changed! Nations are changed!

If America is to be saved from her moral sickness and spiritual decay, the Lord must do it. We must not look to the White House, but to the Church House.

If America is to be saved, the Lord must do it! Will you do your part? Will you "humble yourself, and pray, and seek his face, and turn from your wicked ways?"

If so, God will hear from heaven, forgive our sin, and heal our land.



# Arkansas missions volunteers injured in Romania

GIURGIU, Romania (BP)—Two Arkansas Baptist missions volunteers and an independent missionary based in Romania were injured May 15 in an auto-

mobile accident in Giurgiu, Romania. The three were taken to Emergency Hospital in the capital city of Bucharest.

The volunteers are part of a

22-member Arkansas Baptist missions team scheduled to serve in Giurgiu and surrounding villages as part of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's missions partnership with the European Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB).

The two-week project is being coordinated by Church Starts International, an independent church-starting organization that works in cooperation with the FMB.

Jim Hornsby, a resident missionary with Church Starts International, met team members Steve Glidewell and Samantha Neal at the Bucharest airport and was driving them to Giurgiu when the accident occurred.

The accident reportedly involved a collision with a truck. Hornsby suffered two broken legs, a crushed foot, and abdominal bleeding. He underwent nine hours of surgery following the accident.

Glidewell also suffered two broken legs; Neal received a broken arm and a gash on her head. They were airlifted to

Wiesbaden, Germany, May 17, for medical treatment.

Glidewell and Neal, members of East Side Church, Paragould, were the first two volunteers to arrive in Romania.

The other team members, including two physicians, were scheduled to arrive in Bucharest May 15. The volunteer group includes a medical team, evangelism team, and construction team.

Arkansas and Mississippi are among the larger, "main line" Southern Baptist state conventions that enter into partnerships with Baptists in pioneer states and foreign countries.

Mississippi currently enjoys partnerships with the state of Colorado and the country of Venezuela in South America.



## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

### Skaggs wows seniors



HEART FOR GOSPEL — Country gospel music entertainer Ricky Skaggs plays to a crowd of 11,000 at the Third National Southern Baptist Senior Adult Convention, April 28-30, in Nashville. For more information on the gathering, please turn to page four. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

# Miss. woman directing relief program

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

Donna Swarts of Magee, a member of Corinth Church in Simpson Association, has been called in to coordinate child care for Southern Baptist disaster relief efforts in the Grand Forks, N.D. area devastated by recent Red River flooding.

While clean up efforts are underway, child care becomes a primary concern, Swarts said, because most child care in the area was done in homes rather than in churches or other public buildings — and most of those homes have been flooded.

"At the present time we have four day care centers servicing over 200 children at any part of the day," she said.

Swarts is coordinating the work of Baptist child care units from Ohio, Ark., Ill., Minn., and Mo.

"We are not just taking care of the needs of children; we are also a witness for Jesus. In one place we are doing child care in a Lutheran church while staying in a Catholic church.

"It is so neat to see how God is bringing down barriers between denominations and people. The members of St. Jude Catholic

Church say we are the greatest thing that has happened to their church," she said.

When the river breached the city's levees the sewer system was overwhelmed, contaminating everything that has been touched by the flood waters, according to news reports.

Swarts said that as a result of the contamination, relief workers need just about everything related to child care.

"Baby wipes, booster seats, high chairs, port-a-cribs, pull toys — anything for children.

"Even the little wooden tyke furniture — which takes an ax to break apart — is contaminated. The bacteria settles in the wood so it all has to be destroyed," she pointed out.

The area children have been so thoroughly warned about contamination that one child asked if the green play dough she had was contaminated, Swarts recalled.

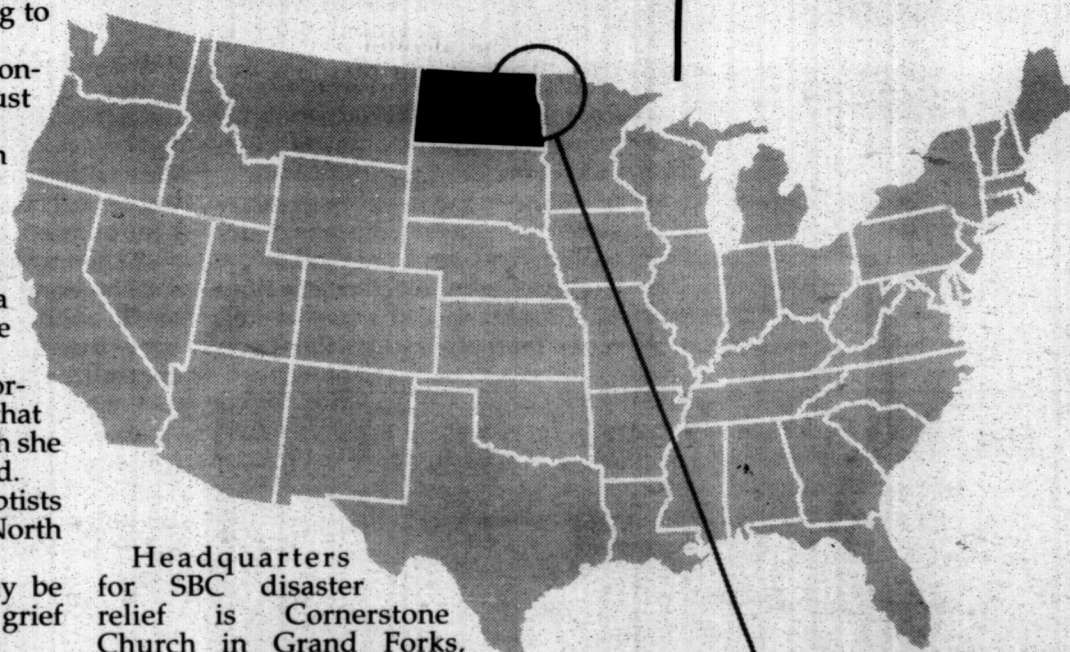
Swarts asked that Mississippi Baptists remember to pray for the people of North Dakota.

"The devastation I have seen may be cleaned up in six months, but the grief process will last for years," she said.

She also urged prayer for the people of

East Grand Forks, Minn., where the damage has been just as great but has not received as much media attention.

"There is one Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) church in that area," she said.



Headquarters for SBC disaster relief is Cornerstone Church in Grand Forks, which is on high ground and was not flooded.

"They have been more than generous with their new church," Swarts said. "Their pastor, Doug Lee, said that our presence here will help his work in ways he could never have replicated."

Swarts has been involved in the disaster relief ministries of the Miss. Woman's Missionary Union and Miss. Brotherhood Department since the August 1993 flood in Albany, Ga. She has been in North Dakota since May 12.

The 500-year flood along the Red River forced the evacuation of as many as 100,000 people and created a lake covering 4.5 million acres in N.D. and Minn., according to news reports.

Flood stage at Grand Forks is 28 feet. The Red River crested there at 54 feet on April 22, and continued to create problems as the swollen flow entered Canada.

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## How you can help in North Dakota

Jan Cossitt, consultant for the Miss. Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) in Jackson, said items for the child care ministry in North Dakota are now being collected at Camp Garaywa in Clinton. People are asked to donate urgently-needed items from the following list:

port-a-cribs  
crayons/colors  
construction paper  
markers  
pull toys  
(wagon, etc.)

child mats  
(nap mat)  
baby monitors  
smoke detectors  
fire extinguishers  
high chairs

"wee-sing" tapes  
car seats  
booster seats  
potty chairs  
strollers  
little tyke toys.

Items may be delivered to Camp Garaywa, 310 Camp Garaywa Road, Clinton, MS 39056, or mailed to P.O. Box 1278, Clinton, MS 39056. Persons wishing to make a money donation should make checks payable to the Mississippi Baptist

Convention Board, designated to North Dakota disaster relief.

For more information contact Miss. WMU, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



# First year a whirlwind for new WMU head

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor



Wanda Lee of Columbus, Ga., 16th national president of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), met with a group of women from North Delta Association churches in Clarksdale while in Mississippi to participate in health fairs conducted by the North Delta at five different sites during the week of May 5-9.

"I got involved in WMU because two elderly ladies — Ara Champion and Julia Nichols — asked me to go with them to a prayer meeting," Lee told the WMU members gathered at a motel in Clarksdale.

The two ladies eventually took her to the Ala. WMU annual meeting, where she was introduced to WMU mission education programs.

"I came back to Gilgal Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa and started age group programs. I took the Acteens myself," she said.

Lee said she followed the Lord's leadership from the beginning of missions involvement. Part of that involvement was a brief missionary stint in St. Vincent, a part of the Windward Islands, starting in 1979.

Her husband Larry served as a church planter and pastor of Kingstown Church, while Wanda worked as a nurse. They were forced to return home in 1981 due to the illness of their son Matthew.

With the support of her family, Lee has embarked upon an incredible journey as national WMU president.

"I am trying to get to as many states as I can and meet as many woman as I can," she said.

Since being elected less than 12 months ago, she has visited more than 10 states. "I've been

home only three weekends," she said.

"I want to learn as much as I can this first year. I have discovered that we (Southern Baptist women) are so diverse. What works in Illinois won't necessarily wash in Georgia," she pointed out.

In discussing new ministries of WMU, Lee expressed excitement about the Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC), a holistic training program for women in need.

Lee explained CWJC was launched in 1995 through several pilot projects across the nation, including San Antonio, Chicago, and a statewide project in South Carolina.

The pilot projects showed WMU could provide the encouragement to help move women from dependency to self-sufficiency, she said.

With welfare reform now on the nation's agenda, the need for CWJC is even greater, Lee noted.

"Most of the recipients of welfare benefits are single women with children," Lee said. "If we do not respond and help we will soon see an increase in the number of homeless and hungry."

"This is probably the most exciting thing WMU has worked on," Lee said, "and it is due to the insight of Dellanna (O'Brien) and the other national office leadership."

O'Brien is the executive director/treasurer of the national WMU in Birmingham.

Noting that CWJC became an official WMU ministry on March 1, Lee said WMU will offer the first national certification training event Aug. 7-9 at WMU headquarters in Birmingham.

"This training event is not for someone who just wants to learn about this type of ministry, but for someone who is committed to do it," Lee said.

For more information on the Aug. 7-9 event, contact Trudy Johnson at WMU, P.O. Box 830010, Birmingham, AL 35283. Telephone: (205) 991-4972; or e-mail Johnson at 70423.355@compuserve.com.

In a question-and-answer session during the Clarksdale meeting, Lee reported that WMU's relationship with the Southern Baptist mission boards continues to be massaged as those agencies are involved in restructuring.

Lee said while the relationship with the International Mission Board appears settled, little is known about the relationship with North American Mission Board (NAMB).

NAMB is the agency that will replace the Home Mission Board, the Radio and Television Commission, and the Brotherhood Commission in June as a part of the Covenant for a New Century restructuring plan of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Lee said a fact-finding group representing NAMB met with



**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT** — Wanda Lee, national president of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, takes blood from volunteer Jackie Verell of Tupelo at the health fair at Friar's Point in North Delta Association. (Photo by Carl M. White)

WMU national leadership last month, and while the dialogue was open and broad, no decisions were made and probably none will be made until after June.

She pointed out that while many questions about the future remain unanswered, WMU is committed to missions and missions education, and will "continue to do what we have done for 109 years."

When asked about success in involving younger women in WMU, Lee stressed that such success often means doing things differently and offering more options.

She said some state WMUs have been successful in drawing younger women by planning a different kind of annual meeting.

"It was held over a weekend — a Friday, Saturday, Sunday event — in conjunction with a larger state training event."

"A young woman with a child, who has to choose between a church leadership training event or a WMU annual meeting, is probably going to get the training."

"The hook for getting young women in WMU is hands-on

involvement. Women on Mission lifestyle groups, prayer groups, and ministry groups can all have a part," she said.

Lee related a late night, two-hour sharing session with eight Acteens. "I asked them tough questions," she said.

Lee recalled that when asked if they wanted WMU to be around when they were age 30, the girls responded overwhelmingly positive.

"One girl said, 'Everything I have learned about the Christian life I learned in GAs and Acteens.' Another girl talked about how different the path she had chosen was from the other girls in her high school, and it was all because of our mission education programs," Lee said.

Lee, a registered nurse, was elected president in June 1996 at the WMU annual meeting in New Orleans. She can be elected to serve up to five one-year terms.

North Delta Association is composed of the 20 churches in Coahoma, Quitman, and Tunica Counties in the northwest corner of Miss. The health clinics were held in the towns of Lambert, Friar's Point, Coahoma, Crowder, and Clarksdale.

## COM heading to Kansas for annual national rally

HUTCHINSON, Kan. — "As You Go, Make a Difference" will be the theme of the 1997 Campers on Mission (COM) National Rally June 10-13 at the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson.

Campers on Mission is a non-denominational volunteer organization for Christians who like to combine camping with ministry. It is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The national rally is being hosted by Kansas-Nebraska Campers on Missions, which was chartered by the national organization only three years ago. Kansas-Nebraska COM was named the National Chapter of

the Year in 1996. Activities will include conferences relating to missions and ministry, worship rallies, fellowship time, and tours of area attractions.

A registration fee of \$15 per person is due by May 26. The cost will be \$20 after that, and rally participants may register upon arrival.

Recreational vehicle camping at the state fairgrounds will be \$10 per night. Evening meals will be catered at a cost of \$6.50 per person for adults and \$4.50 each for children.

Write for a registration form at the following address: Ed and Dorothy Hadden, 3025 SW Jewell Ave., Topeka, KS 66611-1927.

## MBHS to host John Trent conference on June 14

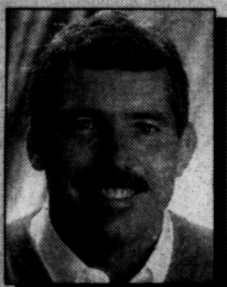
Mississippi Baptist Health Systems, Inc. (MBHS) in Jackson will host a family conference entitled "Loving Relationships for a Lifetime," featuring author and speaker John Trent, on June 14 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Deville Cinema facility on Interstate 55 North in Jackson.

Trent is president of Encouraging Words, a ministry dedicated to strengthening relationships. Over the past eight years, he has presented this seminar to over 85,000 people across the U. S. and Canada. He has written many books over the course of his 12-year ministry, including "The Blessing" and "The Two Sides of Love."

He is also a frequent guest at Promise Keeper conferences; appears in Focus on the Family presentations; is a frequent guest on the 700 Club radio and television programs, and contributes articles to magazines such as "Christian Parenting" and "Focus on the Family."

Admission is \$10 per person or \$15 per couple. For more information, contact Mississippi Baptist Medical Center at (601) 948-6262 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 948-6262.

The event is being co-sponsored by Jackson radio stations WHJT-FM, WYFS-FM, and WOAD-AM



Trent



# Women's Weekender slated for Ridgecrest

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Worship, Bible study, prayer, and opportunities for personal spiritual growth will make up the Women's Weekender June 27-29 at Ridgecrest Conference Center. (N.C.)

Program personalities for the weekend include Rhonda Kelley, Karla Worley, Esther Burroughs, and Jennifer Kennedy Dean.

The Christian drama team, Face to Face, also will perform. The program begins with dinner on Friday evening and concludes with lunch on Sunday. The conference is sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union (WMU).

Kelley will be the Bible study leader and Worley will serve as worship leader for the three-day gathering.

Kelley is a frequent speaker at women's ministries conferences and serves on the advisory council of the Baptist Sunday School Board's Women's Enrichment Ministry Council. She is a prolific writer, having authored "Divine Discipline" in 1992 and served as co-editor and contributor to the "The New King James Woman's Study Bible" in 1995. Her husband, Chuck, is president of New Orleans Seminary.

Worley is a minister's wife, mother, writer, musician, and teacher who lives in



Worley



Kelley

Franklin, Tenn. As a writer and artist, she has recorded three albums; toured in over 600 concerts in the U.S. and internationally; and written numerous products for adult, youth and children's church choirs.

She is the author of "When the Glass Slipper Doesn't Fit," and a frequent contributor to "Missions Mosaic," WMU's magazine for women.

Burroughs and Dean will lead conferences during the Women's Weekender, focusing on their 1997 WMU releases. Burroughs' book is "A Garden Path to Mentoring," and Dean wrote "Riches Stored in Secret Places" and "Secret Place of the Most High."

Along with writing, the women also have full-time ministries.

Burroughs of Jacksonville, Fla., is a leading authority on women's issues and women's evangelism, serving for several years as a national evangelism consultant with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Dean of Blue Springs, Mo., is co-founder of The Praying Life Foundation, speaking frequently to Christian groups on prayer as a relationship with God and not just an activity.

A variety of other topics will be covered in small group sessions, including marriage and family issues, child-rearing,



Dean



Burroughs

finances, health issues, and spiritual and leadership development.

Conference leaders include Barbara Joiner, an author from Columbiana, Ala.; Cynthia Krause, a lawyer from Dallas; and Dorothy Sample, a professional counselor from Flint, Mich.

Sample also will be available for private counseling sessions.



## Embrace God's Love

### Women's Weekender

**June 27-29, 1997**

**Ridgecrest Conference Center • Ridgecrest, North Carolina**

Women's Weekender is sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, Birmingham, Alabama  
For more information, contact Mississippi WMU (800) 748-1651

Cost for the conference ranges from \$98.50 to \$172 per person including all meals. Child care will be provided for children birth through age 5.

To register, contact Ridgecrest Conference Center toll-free at (800) 588-7222.

## Conference speakers urge seniors to keep serving

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — About 11,000 senior adults from Maryland to California gathered in Nashville, Tenn., for the third National Southern Baptist Senior Adult Convention, April 28-30, to sing, fellowship, get inspired, and be entertained.

Meeting in four general sessions, the denomination's older members heard messages from Anne Graham Lotz, daughter of

Billy Graham; Bill Mitchell, author of "Building Strong Families;" Joni Eareckson Tada, author of "Heaven Your Real Home;" Baptist Sunday School Board President James T. Draper Jr., who led daily Bible study sessions; and T.W. Hunt, nationally known prayer consultant.

Country humorist George "Goober" Lindsey made them laugh and gospel entertainer

Ricky Skaggs made them cry as he sang sentimental songs about the responsibilities that accompany growing older.

The event was sponsored by the BSSB discipleship and family development division.

Speakers' messages revolved around the conference theme, "Remember the Future." Seniors were urged to celebrate the remainder of their lives, to believe in the possibility of a "triumphant long life" and to use their wisdom for guiding younger generations.

Tada's message for senior adults was: "Your days are numbered."

The popular Christian author and speaker said that's nothing to fret about, but something to celebrate.

"Friends, life is short. Time is a treasure. Our days are priceless. ... Please, let's not waste our precious days," said Tada, who has spent more than 30 years in a wheelchair since a diving accident left her a quadriplegic at age 17.

Admittedly down at times, she shared a favorite verse that always helps "rev up" her energy level. Psalm 90:12 (NIV) says, "Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

"I've got this habit of numbering my days," Tada said. "Each day when I wake up, I thank God for a brand new 24 hours that he's given me. I pray

for him to teach me that each moment, each hour has value."

She also reminded seniors valuable lessons can be learned from suffering.

"Nothing better prepares us to meet the Lord Jesus in heaven than our own afflictions down here on earth," she said.

If she could, Tada said she'd take her wheelchair to heaven and tell Jesus: "The weaker I was in this thing, the more I leaned on you. And the more I leaned on you, the stronger I became."

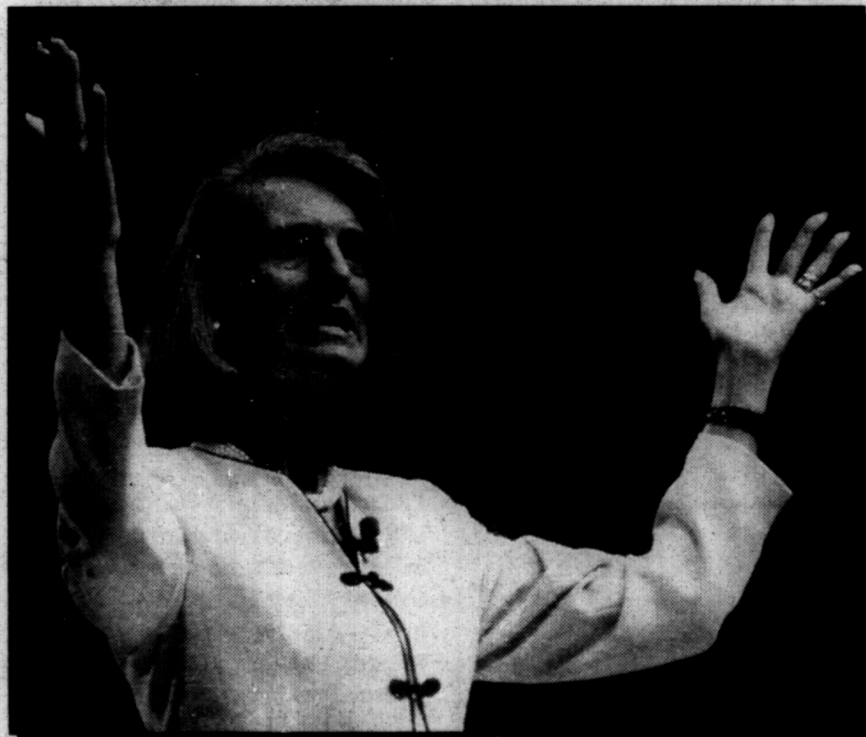
"Yes, life is hard," Tada said. "Yes, suffering and discomfort are with us. But it's worth hanging on. Don't wind down; don't plateau out."

God has given you another moment, another hour, another day. Do something with it."

Meanwhile, Draper told the senior adults "that the Word of God promises the possibility of a triumphant long life, one that glows with the glory of God."

He said, three things the Bible teaches about a triumphant old age are:

- ◆ "it reflects on past faithfulness;
- ◆ it projects the present goodness and sustaining power of God;
- ◆ it reflects upon future blessedness."



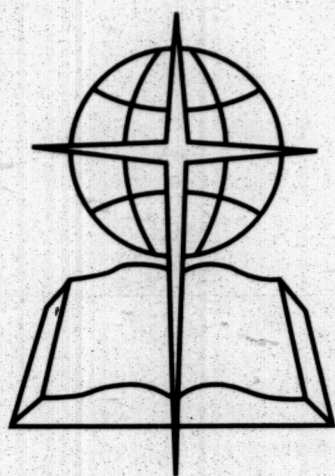
SHARING WITH SENIORS — Anne Graham Lotz, founder of AnGel Ministries and the second daughter of evangelist Billy Graham and Ruth Bell Graham, spoke to 11,000 senior adults at the Third National Senior Adult Convention in Nashville, April 28-30. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

## Thanks to Briar Hill

In the special Cooperative Program (CP) issue of "The Baptist Record" on April 17, Briar Hill Church, Rankin Association should have been listed ninth in the \$500,000-\$999,999 total receipts category. Thanks for their CP gifts of \$85,319. Please excuse the omission.

— Stewardship Department  
Miss. Bapt. Conv. Board





## Southern Baptist Convention

1997 Annual Meeting  
and  
associated meetings

June 15-19, 1997  
Dallas, Texas

# Mississippi's current SBC trustees listed

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NASHVILLE, TENN.

**Reuel May Jr.**, Jackson dentist. Member of First Church, Jackson. Term expires 1997 (nominated for second term).

**Larry Otis**, Tupelo businessman. Member of Calvary Church, Tupelo. Term expires 1998.

**James R. Futral**, pastor of Broadmoor Church, Jackson. Term expires 2000.

### INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD RICHMOND, VA.

**Billy Joe Beckett**, Columbus retired pastor. Term expires 1998.

**Frank Gunn**, pastor of First Church, Biloxi. Term expires 1999.

**Robert M. Williamson**, pastor of Park Place Church, Brandon. Term expires 2000.

### NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD ATLANTA, GA.

**Kendall Moore**, Jackson attorney. Member of Broadmoor Church, Jackson. Term expires 1998.

**David Raddin**, pastor of First Church, Yazoo City. Term expires 1998.

### BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD NASHVILLE, TENN.

**Lynda Barfield**, Hattiesburg teacher. Member of Main Street

Church, Hattiesburg. Term expires 1997 (nominated for second term).

**Bernie Brooks**, Ellisville businessman. Member of West Ellisville Church, Ellisville. Term expires 1997 (nominated for second term).

**Gus Q. Merritt**, retired pastor of Clarke Venable Church, Newton. Term expires 1998.

### ANNUITY BOARD DALLAS, TEXAS

**T. Jack Colvin**, Jackson businessman. Member of First Church, Jackson. Term expires 1999.

**Frank Harmon**, pastor of First Church, Newton. Term expires 2000.

### SOUTHERN SEMINARY LOUISVILLE, KY.

**Thomas M. Atwood**, pastor of First Church, Oxford. Term expires 1998.

**Odean W. Puckett**, pastor of First Church, Natchez. Term expires 2000.

**J.D. Cutrer**, Baldwin retired businessman. Member of First Church, Baldwin. Term expires 2001.

### SOUTHWESTERN SEMINARY FORT WORTH, TEXAS

**Billy Brumfield**, pastor of Immanuel Church, Vicksburg. Term expires 1998.

### NEW ORLEANS SEMINARY NEW ORLEANS, LA.

**Jerry Adkins**, Biloxi surgeon. Member of First Church, Biloxi. Term expires 1997 (nominated for second term).

**William H. Hanberry**, Hattiesburg businessman. Member of South 28th Avenue Church, Hattiesburg. Term expires 2001.

**Albert H. McMullen**, retired pastor of Stonewall Church, Stonewall. Term expires 2001.

**James W. Street**, pastor of Calvary Church, Jackson. Term expires 2001.

### SOUTHEASTERN SEMINARY WAKE FOREST, N.C.

**Dwight L. Smith**, pastor of West Ellisville Church, Ellisville. Term expires 2001.

### MIDWESTERN SEMINARY KANSAS CITY, MO.

**Randy McHan**, pastor of Edon Church, Stringer. Term expires 1998.

### GOLDEN GATE SEMINARY MILL VALLEY, CALIF.

**Richard Johnson**, pastor of Parkview Church, Greenville. Term expires 1998.

### ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION NASHVILLE, TENN.

**Paul D. Walley**, Richton attorney. Member of First Church, Richton. Term expires 1998.

### 1997 COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES (ALL TERMS EXPIRE 1997)

**Steve Bain**, pastor of East Heights Church, Tupelo.

**Louise Shannon**, Yazoo City homemaker. Member of First Church, Yazoo City.

### 1997 SBC ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 17-19 DALLAS, TEXAS

(ALL TERMS EXPIRE 1997)

### RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

**Clark Stewart**, pastor of Harmony Church, Crystal Springs.

### CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

**Kevin Smith**, pastor of North Carrollton Church, North Carrollton.

### COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

**Phil Walker**, pastor of Ridgecrest Church, Madison.

**Evans Whittle**, Tupelo retired businessman. Member of First Church, Tupelo.

## Associated gatherings set for SBC annual meet

**African-American Fellowship.** June 15. Singing Hills Baptist Church, Dallas. Contact Ethel Williams at (800) 999-3113, ext. 143.

**Associational Directors of Missions.** June 15-16. Adam's Mark Hotel, Dallas.

**Baptist World Alliance.** June 18. Hyatt Regency Hotel, Dallas. Contact BWA, 6733 Curran St., McLean, VA 22101-6005. (703) 790-8980.

102726.3061@compuserve.com.

**Evangelists, Conference of Southern Baptist.** June 18. First Church, Dallas. Contact Tom Cox, P.O. Box 2, Mountainburg, AR 72946. (501) 369-4260.

**Founders Conference.** June 17 breakfast. Dallas Convention Center. Contact Steve Farish, Crossroads Baptist Church, 1190 Winchester Road, Libertyville, IL 60048. (847) 362-7120.

**Golden Gate Seminary.** June 18 luncheon. Dallas Convention Center. Contact GGBTS Alumni Relations, 201 Seminary Drive, Mill Valley, CA 94941, or seminary booth in the exhibit hall (limited number).

**Hispanic Fellowship.** June 14-15. Primera Iglesia Bautista Nueva Vida (New Life First Baptist Church), 2000 S. First St., Garland.

**Local Church Missions Conference.** June 13-14. Southwestern Seminary World Missions Center, Fort Worth. Contact SWBTS at P.O. Box 22000, Fort Worth, TX 76122-0418. (817) 923-1921.

**Messianic Fellowship.** June 16. Fairmont Hotel, Dallas.

**Midwestern Seminary.** June 18 luncheon. Dallas Convention Center. Contact Laura Gust, MBTS Alumni Office, 5001 N. Oak Street Trafficway, Kansas City, MO 64118, or seminary booth in the exhibit hall.

**Ministers' Wives.** June 17 luncheon. Dallas Convention Center. Contact Peggy Walker, 406 Tricia Lane, Elizabethtown, KY 42701. (502) 769-6373.

**Mississippi College.** June 17 ice cream social. Dallas Convention Center. Contact MC Alumni Office at (601) 925-3208.

**New Orleans Seminary.** June 18 breakfast. Hyatt-Regency Hotel, Dallas. Contact NOBTS Alumni Office, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA, 70126, or seminary booth in the exhibit hall.

**Research Fellowship.** June 14. Baptist General Convention of Texas offices, Dallas. Contact Clay Price, BGCT, 333 N. Washington St., Dallas, TX 75246.

**Samford University.** June 16 luncheon. Hyatt Regency Hotel, Dallas. Contact Allen Walworth at (214) 869-1541.

**Southern Seminary.** June 18 luncheon. Hyatt Regency Hotel, Dallas. Contact the seminary at 2825 Lexington Drive, Louisville, KY 40280. (502) 897-4143.

**Southeastern Seminary.** June 18 luncheon. First Baptist Church, Dallas. Contact seminary alumni office at P.O. Box 1889, Wake Forest, NC 27588, or seminary's booth in the SBC exhibit hall (limited number available).

**Southwestern Seminary.** June 18 "Homecoming III". Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth. Contact the Southwestern booth in the convention exhibit area.

**William Carey College.** June 17 luncheon. Dallas Convention Center. Contact WCC Cooper School of Missions at (601) 582-6115, or school's booth in the SBC exhibit hall.

# To The Cross

"For the preaching of the cross...  
is the power of God!"

1 CORINTHIANS 1:18

**Campus Ministers.** June 13-15. Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth. Contact Bob Ford, Jacksonville State University, P.O. Box 151, Jacksonville, AL 36265. (205) 435-7020.

**Chaplains Convocation.** June 16. Baylor Medical Center, Dallas.

**Church Music Conference.** June 15-16. First Church, Richardson. Contact Louis Ball, Carson-Newman College, P.O. Box 71934, Jefferson City, TN 37760.

**Dallas Prayer Walk.** June 12-13. Contact Jana Young at Dallas Baptist Association: (214) 324-2803; e-mail,



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## Is your church for everyone?

Begin or strengthen a special education ministry. *Special Education Today* (0767346890) is the publication ministering to special education persons, their families, and other caregivers. And there's a new book to help: *A Place for Everyone: A Guide for Special Education Bible Teaching-Reaching Ministry* (0767318986).

Contact *The Sunday School Board* for these resources: Email to 70423.2526@compuserve.com or fax your order anytime to 615-251-5933.



What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

May 22, 1997

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

## KEYS TO PLANNING FOR THE NEW CHURCH YEAR

- 1. Elect and train your Church Leadership Team (Church Council or Key Leaders).
- 2. Order 1997-98 Church Design Handbook (601-968-3800 or 800-748-1651).
- 3. Write or review your church's Mission Statement.
- 4. Select a few Priority Concerns for 1997-98.
- 5. Set one or more measurable goals for each priority concern for 1997-98.
- 6. Develop action plans for each goal for 1997-98.
- 7. Correlate action plans into your church calendar for 1997-98.
- 8. Build your church budget for the new year.
- 9. Present your plans to the church for discussion and approval.

## RESOURCES ON PLANNING

**"Church Leadership Team Handbook"**  
Product number 5201-18  
Baptist Sunday School Board

**"1997-98 Church Design Handbook"**  
Ministry Office  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

**Church Administration Magazine, May 1997, Baptist Sunday School Board**

**"Planning Video on Using Church Design Handbook" - Broadcast Services**  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

**"A Uniform Method of Church Leadership" - Executive Director**  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

## AGRICULTURAL MISSIONS FELLOWSHIP PARTNERSHIP MISSIONS PROJECTS

Since January 1996, Mississippi Baptists have partnered with the country of Venezuela. This partnership has opened doors of ministry as the Venezuelans have discovered needs and developed projects for which they have requested help through the partnership. Needs discovered include agricultural projects such as clean water, good crop methods, etc. Medical teams have been able to help with some of the health problems and aid in the area of nutrition. The Agricultural Mission Fellowship recently sent a survey team to Venezuela composed of Aubrey Cox of Brookhaven, Ernest Scruggs of Sardis, and Dick Stafford of Greenwood to help in determining some of the needs. The projects listed below came about as a result of this survey.

### Water Well Projects

There is a need for clean drinking water in many communities. There will be a need for water wells in the areas for gardening and farming projects. Dialogue is going on now between Bill Schultz of the Agri-Missions Fellowship and David Browder, the Mississippi/Venezuela Projects coordinator in Venezuela regarding this project. More information will be forthcoming as the facts develop.

### Garden Projects

The survey team has identified twenty areas for garden plots. Each plot consists of a 20'x40' space. It is estimated that each plot will need twenty packages of seed plus fertilizer. Seed packets cost \$1 each. It is suggested that RAs, GAs, Challengers and Acteens adopt Garden Plots and do Walk-a-Thons and other events to raise funds for this project.

### Construction Projects

In Venezuela, as in the United States, many cities have "street children." One of the missionaries has designed a pilot project consisting of a frame structure where hammocks could be strung so that these homeless children would have a place to sleep at night. This could provide a unique opportunity to minister to these youths. The goal is to build ten of these structures at a cost of \$400 per structure. Again, a great project for Royal Ambassador Chapters would be to adopt one hut for which to provide funds.

### Animal and Fish Projects

National Baptists in Venezuela have a camp with several acres of property surrounding it. It is their goal to make this property productive for the benefit of the camp by incorporating the following:

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| • Goats            | 10 @ \$100 each |
| • Breeding Heifers | 10 @ \$250 each |
| • Milk Cows        | 10 @ \$500 each |
| • Fish Projects    | 2 @ \$250 each  |

Churches, Baptist Men and Baptist Women groups, Royal Ambassadors, Girls In Action, Acteens, and Challenger groups desiring a mission project are encouraged to consider one or more of these projects.

Our goal is to secure the funds in 1997 so that these projects can be implemented in 1998. Funds may be designated to a specific project. The following form has been developed for your use. If you have questions, please call the Partnership Office at 1-800-748-1651.

### AGRI-MISSIONS FELLOWSHIP - PARTNERSHIP WITH VENEZUELA

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the Venezuela Agri-Missions Project

Check one: ☐ Garden Plot Project  
☐ Construction Project  
☐ Animal/Fish Project

\_\_\_\_ Goats  
\_\_\_\_ Milk Cows

\_\_\_\_ Breeding Heifers  
\_\_\_\_ Fish Project

Contributed by:

\_\_\_\_ GAs  
\_\_\_\_ Challengers  
\_\_\_\_ Baptist Women

\_\_\_\_ Acteens  
\_\_\_\_ Baptist Men  
\_\_\_\_ Individual

\_\_\_\_ RAs  
\_\_\_\_ Church  
\_\_\_\_ Other

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Association \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to : Partnership Office, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205



# Mississippi Baptist

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Mississippi College  
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MATT WILBURN  
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California



WENDY WILKERSON  
USM  
California



ANDY WINN  
William Carey  
Israel



# Pray this day for...

May 23-June 5, 1997

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

## Why Pray?

1. Prayer fuels faith, prompting us to dream and hope and risk.
2. Prayer woos us to the Word by our need to hear God's response to our requests.
3. Prayer teaches trust in God through waiting upon His timing.
4. Prayer reveals God's plan and our purpose for the present and the future.
5. Prayer releases God's power to live and walk in the supernatural realm of the Holy Spirit.
6. Prayer unleashes love for God — emotional, real, and all-consuming.

--Becky Tirabassi in Let Prayer Change Your Life

Continue praying that God would call out couples to fill the 8 requests for new missionaries needed in Angola. At present we have 2 missionary couples living in Luanda, Angola's capital of over 3 million people.

**Religious Liberty Sunday** - A young man was arrested and charged recently for evangelistic activities in Eilat, Israel. Pray for his immediate pardon. Pray for wisdom and protection for Baptist representatives Herby and Anne Geer who will arrive in June to serve in this region.

For II Senior Adult Conference; Gulfshore Assembly (D&FM)

For I Youth Conference; Gulfshore Assembly 2-6 (MBCB)  
G.A. Mini-Camp; Camp Garaywa; 10 am, 2nd-noon, 4th (WMU)

David & Cathy Brandon ask you to pray for the people of Burundi. "There are thousands displaced, and many more overcome with hopelessness. Three pastors were arrested last month and several have lived in hiding for months."

Now is a critical time for the evangelization of Sudan. Fundamental Islam is slowly strangling this country, eliminating cultural identity with the past. Pray for the movement of the gospel throughout Sudan, which is 75% Muslim, 20% African traditional and 5% Christian.

In May 1996, an Oil-for-Food Plan was agreed upon to relieve some of the suffering the Iraqi population has experienced due to UN sanctions. Thank God that the first shipment of food was imported and distributed in Iraq in March 1997. Pray that more shipments will follow soon.

Pray for Pastor Ronald Rouchaud, president of the Pastors' Fellowship in Benin. Pray that God will give him divine wisdom and understanding in the work as he leads and that he might be a good example for others to follow.

For III Senior Adult Conference; Gulfshore Assembly (D&FM)

For G.A. Mini-Camp; Camp Garaywa; 10 am, 5th-noon, 7th (WMU)

For North Mississippi Baptist Conference of the Deaf Bible Study; Camp Armstrong, Blue Springs; 7 pm, 23rd-noon, 25th (MEAA)

For Single Adult Conference; Gulfshore Assembly (D&FM)

Pray that missionaries Alejandro & Bertha Ortiz's idea of using a mosque type worship of God will be the solution for developing the faith of Muslims in Benin and for helping them share their faith with their families.

Please continue to pray for the National Baptist Convention of Guatemala as they face many problems. They need prayer for direction, and finances continue to be a problem.



## JULY

2-83 MISS ALAINE C. BAKER  
21 Dondanville Road, #6, St. Augustine, FL 32084  
Parents: Kenneth & Lynn, Dentistry; COTE D'IVOIRE

2-83 MISS SARAH E. METTS, Lynx Air/Sd Dr.  
P. O. Box 407052, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33310  
Parents: Joe Jr. & Angela, General Evangelism; DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

4-83 MISS TABITHA S. FOX, Visanaia Biserica Baptist  
Str. sf. Nicolae 80., Beltsy 279200, MOLDOVA  
Parents: Thomas & Tammy, General Evangelism

- 11-87 MISS ANDREA J. HENDRICKS, Apartado 1010-7050, Cartago, COSTA RICA  
Parents: Larry & Mary, General Evangelism
- 13-85 MISS RACHEL L. GRAVES, Casilla 1417, Concepcion, CHILE  
Parents: Edgar & Marilyn, General Evangelism
- 17-80 MISS HANNAH SONG, 431 Tee Street, Biloxi, MS 39532  
Parents: Woong Ho & Sook Ja, Field Personnel Assistance
- 20-87 MR. ANDREW F. BAILEY, Apartado 22, 09901, Quetzaltenango, GUATEMALA, C.A.  
Parents: Alvin & Elizabeth, Music Promotion
- 20-87 MR. MAX HUTCHINSON, CP 801, Bissau, Guinea Bissau, WEST AFRICA  
Parents: Michael & Lynn, Church Planters
- 20-93 MR. CHRISTOPHER L. CURTIS, 211 Brooks Ave., Starkville, MS 39759  
Parents: Clifton F. & Cathy P., Agriculture; BURKINA FASO
- 21-82 MISS EMILY F. PARKER, P O Box 943, Brandon, MS 39043  
Parents: Jeffrey & Shiela, General Evangelism; UNITED KINGDOM
- 25-75 MR. RICHARD AUBREY MASSEY, Mississippi College  
P O Box 4657, Clinton, MS 39058  
Parents: Greg & Karen, Church Program Promo; ARGENTINA
- 26-78 MR. VINCENT C. JOHNSTON, Caixa Postal 2053 Jockey  
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Parents: Vincent & Sharon, Conference/Encampment
- 30-80 MR. NATHAN C. COLLINS, c/o ACS Suriname  
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# HOUSE TOPS



# 'Unisex' NIV translation denied by IBS

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (ABP) — Reports that the New International Version (NIV) translation of the Bible will be available in the United States only with "gender-neutral" language are "out-and-out lies," according to a spokesman for the International Bible Society (IBS).

The Bible society, based in Colorado Springs, Colo., owns the rights to the NIV translation and has a contractual relation-

ship with the Committee on Bible Translation (CBT) — the translators and guardians of the text. NIV is the best-selling modern version of the Bible.

On March 29, "World" magazine published a story claiming the CBT had voted to produce a "unisex" version of the NIV in the U.S. Further, the magazine reported, this new version would become the only version of the NIV text available in the U.S.

The magazine followed up with an April 19 story on reaction from Zondervan Publishing House and the IBS, claiming no factual errors had been found in the earlier story but admitting the content of the story had been challenged.

The "World" magazine article "is filled with innuendo and sensationalism, containing unconscionable slander," said Eugene Rubingh, IBS vice president for translations.

Both "World" magazine articles were written by Susan Olasky, who said the magazine is "confident of its stories." "World" doesn't see itself in conflict with the International Bible Society or Zondervan, but just thinks this is an issue that needs full airing," she said.

"World" magazine is a conservative publication based in Asheville, N.C.

Its editor, Marvin Olasky, advocates a style of journalism he calls "directed reporting" or "biblical objectivity."

According to this philosophy, the reporter should determine what the Bible says about an issue and then write about that issue with a slant toward that biblical view.

Rubingh claims the "World" article on the NIV "tries to paint a conspiracy of (NIV translators) and radical feminism."

IBS spokesman Steve Johnson said the guardians of the NIV text have committed themselves to "vigorously resist the feminist agenda."

All CBT members are conservative, evangelical biblical scholars who have signed a statement of faith acknowledging the Bible "in its entirety is the word of God written, and is therefore inerrant in the autographs," he said.

What apparently sparked the "World" magazine article and other reports of a forthcoming "unisex" NIV translation is a 1992 decision by the CBT and the IBS to review the NIV text "with gender-accuracy in mind," Johnson said.

"Gender-accurate" is a more appropriate term than "unisex," Rubingh explained, because the intent is not to

remove all male pronouns but rather to more accurately translate words that in the biblical languages apply to both males and females.

Rubingh cited this example: In translating 1 Cor. 11:28, the NIV currently reads, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup."

"A generation ago, we might have said, 'Obviously, Paul meant men and women,' but today we need to be more accurate and precise in order to convey that Paul meant all of us and not just men," Rubingh said. "So the new rendition would put it more clearly, 'We ought to examine ourselves before we eat.'"

The NIV translators have no intention of changing references that the biblical languages clearly convey in gender terms, Rubingh continued.

"Where the masculine or feminine was intended, no change will occur," he said.

So "Son of God" will never become "Child of God" and "fatherless" will not become "parentless," Rubingh said. God will still be a "he."

This is the basis of a "gender-accurate" NIV translation currently available in Britain, published by Hodder and Stoughton in 1996.

The IBS has not yet exercised its right to publish this translation in the U.S.

However, Zondervan already is publishing in the U.S. an NIV translation for children and readers with limited English skills called the New International Reader's Version, translated "gender-accurate right from the beginning," Johnson said.

No plans have been made to publish the full NIV text in the U.S. in a "gender-accurate" translation, Johnson said.

Want to make up your own mind about the NIV translation flap? Don't miss next week's issue of "The Baptist Record."

## The Road to Everlasting Life



God intends for all his children live with him forever, but the road to everlasting life is blocked. To find that road you must:

### Admit that you are a sinner.

There is none righteous, not even one. (Rom. 3:10)

### Accept God's love for you.

God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:8)

### Acknowledge Christ as Lord.

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. (Rom. 10:9)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Mississippi Baptist Church for spiritual guidance.



## LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*I fear my daughter is married to a man who is not legally divorced from his first or second wives. How can I talk with my daughter about this without putting our lives in danger?*

Of immediate concern is the danger you perceive for your daughter and yourself. You should consider consulting an attorney and/or law enforcement officials if you feel you are in a dangerous situation. Talking with your daughter in a private way would be wise, but the question you must ask yourself is whether she is as concerned about her situation as you are. Who is more worried about this — your daughter or you? If she is not concerned, is defensive, or make excuses for him, you are probably wasting your time trying to convince her that his conduct is wrong. Whether you can talk with her or not, you should pray for her — for her safety, for an opening to talk in the future, and for any other concerns on your heart. When you do get an opportunity to talk with her, it is important that you listen to what she has to say. Before you cast your "pearls of wisdom," be sure both of you have prepared a listening ear.

*How can I trust my husband when every time I turn around he gives me reasons not to — one lie after another, hidden pornography, etc.?*

People who exhibit such behavior as constant lying and attraction to pornography have chosen selfishness over confronting the realities of life. Rather than dealing with their bad conduct or issues of marital intimacy, they turn to lying and pornography for self-preservation and all-important control in a relationship.

Since he fears the realities of life, you must model perfect love that casts out fear (1 John 4:18). You may not get immediate results, but remember your role as his wife (Eph. 5:21-33), and that it is possible to win him over without a word (1 Peter 3:1-2).

Seek out a trusted male leader in your church and — without going into detail on your husband's sins — ask him to enlist other Christian men to pray for and minister to your husband.

If you are confused or harbor doubts about this plan of action, talk with your pastor or a Christian counselor.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

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## JUST FOR THE RECORD

**Bowmar Avenue Church, Vicksburg**, will host Growing Kid's God's Way Parenting Seminar on June 13 and 14. The seminar will be led by Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo of Growing Families International. The times are

June 13, 6-9 p.m.; and June 14, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Childcare will be available for children from birth to 5 years if pre-registered by May 31. For more information or brochure, call (601) 636-2596.

**Calvary Church, Durant**, will sponsor a benefit for youth of all ages on June 6. The Cedar Ridge Band and singing will be held at 7 p.m. Supper will be served at 5:30 p.m.

**Yockanookany Church, Kosciusko**, will celebrate its sesquicentennial on May 25. Activities include a time of sharing with former pastors at 10 a.m. and dinner on the grounds. Edward L. McMillan, executive secretary of the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission will present the history of the church and present a special certificate and



A ground breaking ceremony was held on April 13 at West McComb Church, McComb, for a 80x100 multi purpose building. Pictured are Floyd Johnston, Gerald Austin, Bubba Cullom, Winnie Herring, Tommy Myers, Debbie Coghlan, building committee members; and Mike Pennock, pastor.

letter to the congregation. Caley Ray Nichols is pastor. For more information, call (601) 289-1021.

**Corinth Church, Heidelberg**, will sponsor an auction and singing on May 31. The singing will feature the King Valley Singers, Jayess; Still Water Blue Grass group, Waynesboro; and the Gavin

Family, Soso. Meals will be served starting at noon. For more information, call (601) 787-3828. Edd Holloman is pastor.

**Mississippi Woman's College fellowship luncheon** was held April 22 at First Church, Jackson. Alumnae and former students attending the luncheon were Mary Emma Fancher Beemon, Laura Ann Sumrall Claypool, Elise Curtis, Elizabeth Eubanks Edge, Margaret Lou Hemeter Gillespie, Margaret Gullede Ishee, Lillian Berry Moore, Jimmie Reese Morgan, Margaret Bennett Price, Aline Rowe Nash, Virginia Cooper Quarles, Elizabeth Allen Robertson, Evelyn Fancher Rone, Margaret Sewell, Maggie Leggett Smith, Inez Scott Treadway, Bea White Webb, Ruby Thompson, Donna Wheeler, and Mr. and Mrs. Jim Edwards.

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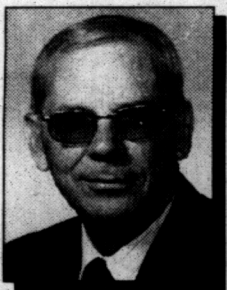
**Rolling Creek Church, Quitman**, held ground breaking services on May 4 for an education building and a recreation building at a cost of \$444,215. Pictured from left are Leo Bonner, Larry Bonner, Lamar Chancellor, building committee; Tony Meinhardt, pastor; R. L. Smith, Nell Gavin, building committee; and Randy Boone, music director. Not pictured is committee chairman Walter Taylor.

## REVIVAL DATES

**Weathersby, Mendenhall**: May 25-28; Sunday, Sunday School, 10 a.m., worship, 11 a.m., and lunch in fellowship hall; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Ken Harris, Magee, evangelist; Donald Walker, Magee, music; Foy Killingsworth, pastor.

## NAMES IN THE NEWS

**Clyde J. Berkley** of Abilene, Texas, has been named associate area director for the Foreign Mission Board's Eastern and Southern Africa area. Berkley and his wife, the former Ann Turner, were appointed missionaries in 1982. Since 1994, he has been a field associate to the area director from a base in Nairobi, Kenya. Before that he was a church developer in Kenya.



Berkley

**Elizabeth Godfrey**, pastoral secretary at Fairview Church, Columbus, was recently elected president of the National Association of Southern Baptist Secretaries (NASBS) at Ridgecrest, N. C. She will serve for two years, 1997-1999.



Godfrey

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**Jerry Garrett** was recently ordained a deacon at Friendship Church, Aberdeen. Pictured (from left), are Thomas Bray, Garrett, and Todd Bowen, pastor.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

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**JERSEY BAPTIST CHURCH**, a dynamic, growing Southern Baptist church located in the central Ohio area, is searching for a full-time minister of music and worship. Forward resumes to Jersey Baptist Church, Attention: Jeff Damron, 13260 Morse Road, Pataskala, OH 43062.

**IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH** is seeking a full-time Youth Pastor. Ideally, he should be married with a family, college degree in youth ministry, and having some experience. Our church runs around 200 in Sunday School with 30 youth on roll. Send resume to Immanuel

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## BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS



William Carey College Department of Theatre and Communication award winners are pictured (back row left) Shannon Clark, Tupelo; Justin Bunton, Loranger, La.; Paul Lee, Milton, Fla.; James Mitchell, Hattiesburg; Jamie Jackson, Raymond; John Miller, Columbia; Jonathan Watts, McComb; (seated) Jennifer Cogan, Laurel; Carrie Cartier, Saraland, Ala.; Kristi Kelley, Clinton; and Leanne Burris, Diamondhead.



William Carey College student, Lee Stauter, Gautier, was recently presented with the J. E. Byrd Memorial Award for Outstanding Religion Major by Dorman Laird, professor of religion.

### New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Annual Alumni & Friends Reunion

#### Breakfast

Wednesday, June 18

7:30 a.m. at the Hyatt-Regency Dallas

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when the Southern Baptist Convention meets in Dallas

#### Featuring...

a message from our president, Dr. Chuck Kelley  
a presentation of the Annual Distinguished Alumnus Award  
a full-course, country-style breakfast

Tickets are on sale now by mail for \$10 each.  
Tickets ordered after June 1 and those purchased at the  
NOBTS exhibit at the SBC will cost \$15 each.

Purchase tickets from the Alumni Office, NOBTS,  
3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126  
Tickets ordered from the office after June 1 may be picked up at  
the seminary's booth at the SBC.

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary: An agency of the Southern  
Baptist Convention, supported by the gifts of the Cooperative Program  
and individuals; also by Friends of the Seminary (FOS) who provide  
assistance through wills, estates, and trusts.

## CMF meetings scheduled

Perry Sanderford, executive director of Covenant Ministerial Fellowship (CMF), announces the first of nine regional conferences for ministers on June 10 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at First Church, Jackson. Registration is \$5.50, which includes lunch. Participants are asked to register before June 6.

The conference features a message by Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson; small group sessions on the roots and results of ministerial isolation; and a panel discussion featuring 11 area pastors and directors of missions.

CMF is a volunteer fellowship of Southern Baptist minis-

ters for the purpose of encouragement, enrichment, challenge and worship, according to Sanderford, a certified Christian Marriage and Family Counselor in Brandon and a CMF founder.

CMF was launched in October of last year at the Rankin County Association's fall meeting where 12 ministers from five association signed a the CMF code of ethics. The CMF code of ethics seeks to set a standard for ministers in their personal and professional lives.

For more information write to Covenant Ministerial Fellowship, P. O. Box 5301, Brandon, MS 39047. Telephone (601) 992-3768.

## HOMECOMINGS

**Shiloh (Carroll):** May 25; services, 11 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds; Doug Warren, pastor, morning message.

**Friendship, Brookhaven:** May 25; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; noon meal; 1 p.m. service; Talmadge Smith, director of missions, Lincoln Association, guest speaker; Harold L. Smith, Brookhaven, music; offering of the day will be used for the upkeep of the cemetery; Jimmy Houston, pastor.

**Ebenezer (Attala):** May 25; 10:30 a.m.; dinner on the grounds, noon; 1:30 p.m. singing with Revelations Quartet, Jackson; Harvey Overstreet, pastor, speaker.

**Concord, McCall Creek:** May 25; services, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; afternoon service 1:15 p.m.; Bobby Harrell, speaker.

**Mt. Olive, Corla:** May 25; 10:15 a.m.; covered dish lunch, noon; Melvin Winters, retired pastor, speaker.

**Chester, Ackerman:** June 1; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship,

11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; Stan Ballard, Jonesboro, Ark., former pastor, guest speaker; Philip Cooper, pastor.

**Heuck's Retreat (Lincoln):** May 25; 11 a.m.; lunch following; Bud Swindall, guest speaker; Tom Moak, music. Afternoon services will include Angela and Mike Britt, Byram Quartet, and a memorial service with a cemetery offering taken.

**First, Lambert:** May 25; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; Floyd Smith, minister of students, Hillcrest Church, Cantonment, Fla., guest speaker; Pam Brown, Madison, music.

**Arlington, Bogue Chitto:** May 25; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch at noon; afternoon singing, 1:30 p.m. with Jubilation Quartet; Fred Kirkland, Pleasant Grove, Pensacola, Fla., guest speaker; Bob Lynch, interim pastor.

**Union, Tylertown:** June 1; services, 10:45 a.m.; covered dish luncheon; afternoon service 1:30 p.m. with "New Wine" of New Hebron; Bendon Ginn, speaker; Mike Sutton Pastor.

**New Hope, Coffeeville:** June 1; 10:45 a.m.; dinner on the grounds, noon; Frank Mixon, pastor, speaker.

## Staff Changes

Temple Church, Hattiesburg, has called **Phillip Thurman** as



Thurman

minister to singles and college students. Thurman, son of Tom and Gloria Thurman, missionaries in Bangladesh, is a graduate of Mississippi College and Southwestern Seminary. His previous place of service was First Church, Jackson, as associate minister of college and singles.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgment of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

### IDAHO PASTOR SOUGHT

Editor:

We are seeking resumes of Native American pastors who are conservative Southern Baptists with knowledge of the structures and programs of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) church and the national SBC organization, including missions.

We are a Home Mission Board supported work on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, near Pocatello and Blackfoot, Idaho. This reservation is of the Shoshone-Bannock tribes.

A person called to be a missionary would be desired.

Sallis Dimett, chairman,  
Pastor Search Committee  
Mountain View Church  
3626 Crawford  
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

### JESUS BREAKS BARRIERS

Editor:

I am a native of Mississippi, having grown up in Grenada. As a young adult, I was baptized at First Church, Grenada. I have not lived in Miss. for over eight years, but I retain a deep love for that great state.

I am reluctant to enter into the dialogue between Miss. Baptists due to the fact that I am no longer one. The letter from Wendell W. Gardner in the April 24 issue supporting segregation forces me to respond. I am amazed and saddened that this issue is being debated in 1997. May God have mercy on us all.

Gardner uses a passage of Scripture (Num. 25: 6-18) to defend his position supporting segregation. A casual reading of this passage makes it clear that God's anger was directed at those who were attempting to trick people into worshipping Baal-Peor instead of him. The ethnicity was not displeasing to God — the actions were. It is a gross abuse of Scripture to suggest that this passage supports segregation.

"Red and yellow, black and white. They are precious in his sight." Jesus was, and is, in the business of breaking down barriers. Let's join him in the effort.

John Osborne  
Tallahassee, Florida

### LEAVE UNIVERSE TO GOD

Editor:

I am appalled at the fact that NASA is wasting a lot of time and money looking for life on Mars and sending a telescope into space to find out how old the universe is and how it began.

If the scientists at NASA would read their Bibles, they would know how the universe began. The Bible says that God created the heavens and the earth, and everything that is in them.

The Bible does not give the age of the universe, but I would assume that it is about 6,000 years old. As for Mars, I don't believe that there is, or ever

was, any life on Mars, and I don't believe that God intended for us to colonize it.

During the week of creation, God created life on earth, but he didn't create life on the other planets. The earth's distance from the sun (93,000,000 miles) and the earth's atmosphere are just right for supporting life.

Mercury and Venus are too close to the sun to support life; Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto are too far from the sun.

When God created Adam and Eve, he commanded them to populate the earth, subdue it, and have dominion over it. He didn't give any commands about the rest of the universe.

Therefore, we should take care of the earth and leave the rest of the universe to God.

Kevin Waller  
Meadville

### HEAVEN NOT SEGREGATED

Editor:

I am a believer in Jesus Christ and a member of Liberty Hill Church, Pope.

In regard to the "Supports segregation" (letter), in the "The Baptist Record," April 24, 1997: Bible reference in this letter was Numbers 25:6-18. This is not about segregation.

Let us back up and look at Numbers 25:1-3. These people were bowing to idol gods, not the God of Heaven. The Ten Commandments teach against this kind of worship.

Look at Exodus 20: 3-6 and 2 Cor. 6:14-18. Before Christ people were under the laws of God handed down to Moses. To break the law was a sin. If they broke the law in one point they were guilty of all (James 2:10).

We today are not under the laws but grace. When Christ went to the cross he ended the law (Rom. 10:4 and 1: 16-18). We have too many problems today without adding fuel to the flame.

Today Jesus is calling all to come unto him (Matt. 11:28-30). All believers are to love and support each other (John 15:10-14). I believe it is overdue for all believers to come together in Christ to solve the problems of the world.

If we make it home to Heaven, it will be all Christians — not segregation.

Charles D. Martin  
Batesville

### THINK TWICE

Editor:

It's mind-boggling to know that we have an editor who would reach to such a low point to print (letters) like the one written by John Armistead in the May 1 issue of "The Baptist Record." He made it very clear — we who are not for integrating the churches are murderers, rapists, and those who perform incest.

Just maybe he could have been referring to a letter some-

one wrote Paul Jones (executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission) indicating his concern for the need for us whites to reach out and bring in the blacks into our fellowship. I have no problem with anyone coming to our church to worship with us in truth and in Spirit.

Although we pass three black churches on our way to church each Sunday morning, I have never seen Jones or any other whites at those churches as they too are gathering for worship. These black neighbors are most likely as saved as we whites are. God gave them a special gift to sing and speak.

These bleeding heart liberals seem to imply that blacks are lost just because they are black.

I believe the black people are just as concerned about their people as we are ours, probably more so.

The Methodists made a big thing of this and it did not work.

I have some black friends and have worked beside some of them. We are all God's children.

I have tried to write this with reverence and uplifting. I wish others would think twice before characterizing others as rapists, murderers, and those who commit incest.

God loves us all equal.  
Tom Walden  
Jackson

### GATHERING AT THE CROSS

Editor:

Poplarville saw denominational and racial barriers fall on March 28 as an enthusiastic crowd of over 375 packed into the 350-seat sanctuary of First Church for the town's first annual Community Good Friday Service.

Despite our diversity and doctrinal differences, we can come together around the Cross.

Several platform speakers said, "God must be pleased tonight," as Christians from fifteen churches representing six denominations worshiped together for two hours.

Joe Beck, pastor of Triumph Missionary Baptist Church, introduced the seven pastors who brought five-minute messages on each of the seven last words of Christ from the Cross. The crowd, which was about one-third black and two-thirds white, frequently chimed in with "amens" and enthusiastically applauded every part of the program.

The service climaxed with a musical drama of the crucifixion and resurrection by costumed actors from Poplarville Assembly of God. The resurrection scene was greeted by the worshippers with a standing ovation.

Five Southern Baptist churches from the Poplarville area participated in the service: Bethel, Faith Memorial, First, Oak Hill, and Springhill.

The Community Good Friday Service was sponsored by the Poplarville Area Ministers' Fellowship.

Bob Rogers, pastor  
First Church, Poplarville

### SLOW DOWN SS LESSONS

Editor:

I look forward each week to being able to sit down and read the variety of opinions we find in the Letters to the Editor section of "The Baptist Record."

I too have an opinion — let me face it, a complaint — concerning "Explore the Bible" Old Testament survey we were supplied with for a Sunday School lesson book.

We find ourselves leapfrogging through Genesis, Exodus, Samuel 1 and 2, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Nehemiah. I hope I didn't miss any since we were moving so fast.

I think we should have slowed down to smell the roses. We passed up so many wonderful stories of faith. Frankly I think it is shameful.

For some of us the only exposure we have to God's Word is in our Sunday School classes.

When the lesson book failed to mention what has to be the most significant episode in Jewish history — namely, the Passover — I felt prompted to write this letter.

Bob Portis  
New Albany

### GRACE CELEBRATES 15TH

Editor:

On February 2 we celebrated 15 years of completed ministry at our church. We began in 1982.

The New Church Expansion Committee came and helped us get started. They approved of our new work here and helped purchase our land with a check for \$18,500.

Then they provided us with a mobile chapel. We now have three buildings completed and still are in need of more space.

We have ordained three young men into the gospel ministry. Another has just surrendered.

Two of our young girls have married preachers.

One of our Acteens felt the call of God to foreign missions. Another young lady and her husband have applied with the Foreign Mission Board already. They are finishing up medical school and are eager to get started.

We have baptized 162 people and have reached countless others who were out of church for whatever reason.

Please let everybody know how much we appreciate all they have done to help us along the way.

Continue the good work and give God the glory.

Dennis Duvall, pastor  
Grace Church, Philadelphia



## LIFE AND WORK

### Sealed by the spirit

II Cor. 1:21-22; 5:1-5; Eph. 1:11-14

By Becky Bennett

Guarantees give us a sense of security. If it breaks, we get our money back.

If we know the job is ours, we relax in the interview. If we know the doctor will say, "everything is fine and there is nothing to worry about," we won't dread keeping the appointment. Knowing the outcome of life's varied situations frees us from the stress of life. Why don't Christians live a joyful and victorious life? We know the end of the story!

**Enabled to Stand Firm (II Cor 1:21-22).** God does the work of keeping us safe. He roots us

firmly in his love. He makes it possible for Christians to stand firm in public display of faith. God shows ownership of his children by placing obvious markings on them. He gives his children his stamp or seal of approval. Just as the kings of ancient history put their seal or identifying mark, upon documents, God puts his seal, his identifying mark upon Christians.

The king's seal also prevented tampering. In like manner, God keeps us from Satan's tampering through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

God's guarantee of his keep-



Bennett

ing power is the gift of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. The Spirit is a deposit guaranteeing the wonderful life to come. These promises of God should create great excitement and anticipation for Christians.

Standing firm for God's principles is a responsibility not to be taken lightly. Because God has done so much for us and because we know his promises are true, we should allow the Spirit to hold us firm in Christ.

**Assured of Eternal Life (II Cor 5:1-5).** God not only enables us to stand firm while we are on this earth, but he promised us security in eternal life. Physical life is temporary and at best is nothing to compare with God's promise of eternal life in our heavenly home. Christians must rest in

this assurance. We know the end result because of God's promise. The Spirit will enable us to exercise faith in trusting God with our eternal life. Those around us should see evidence of this trust. Paul does not say that we should hasten our "home-going." He shares in a wonderful word picture the joys of God's provision and preparation for the homecoming of believers.

We find the Spirit is God's deposit or guarantee for the future. God himself prepares us for the changes that will take place. While the changes are yet unknown to us by experience, we are assured of eternal life because of the presence of the Spirit.

**Marked as Redeemed (Eph 1:11-14).** From the beginning, God had a purpose. Establishing a plan for our salvation, bringing us to him in relationship, and providing

eternal provision for his children was always God's plan. The Holy Spirit enables us to enjoy God's plan and provision. When we accept Christ, God's way of salvation, we are marked as God's child. We are redeemed eternally. The Spirit is our present deposit. He is the down payment on God's wonderful provision for our future. His presence is our guarantee.

Christians can be the most confident people in the world. Because our future is secure, our service should be more certain and more joyful. Our lives must praise God. We must live totally committed to the Holy Spirit. Our witness to the world demands that we show assurance and confidence in our daily lives. Only a Spirit-controlled life can give God the praise and glory he deserves.

Bennett is Dean of Students at Blue Mountain College.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Reviving relationship with God

Nehemiah 8:9-18

By Greg McBride

Well, it happened... Judah's failures finally resulted in the Babylonian captivity, but the exile was not the end of the story nor of God's plan for Israel. This week's lesson focuses on what God's people are to do after they fail.

After 70 years of captivity, God began to bring the people back to their land. First, Ezra returned with a group to rebuild the temple. Later Nehemiah led others back to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. When the walls were completed, the people asked Ezra to read the law of God to them.

**Facing the Past (Neh. 8:9).**

The reading of the law brought a surprise to the people. The law revealed that they had not been faithful to God's commands. Furthermore, it revealed that the Babylonian exile was a direct result of the people's past sin. This revelation pricked the hearts of the people and they began to mourn for their sin.

Quickly, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Levites began to implore the people not to mourn but to celebrate. They reasoned that such an occasion was an opportunity for renewal of their commitment to God instead of a time of mourning. The day was "holy to the Lord."



McBride

Still today God's word pierces our hearts and points out our sin. When this happens and our sin is before us, we should view such occasions as opportunities for renewing our commitment to God. We do this by repenting of our sin and turning to God for a new beginning.

**Rejoicing in the Lord (Neh. 8:10-12).** Ezra gave specific instructions to the people about what they were to do next. They were to go and rejoice through celebration. They were to work themselves up into a joyous state of mind.

Note Ezra's reason for giving this instruction: "because the joy of the Lord is your strength." Have you ever seen a downcast winner? Have you ever heard of a ball team losing momentum when the crowd cheered them on? No. In the same way God's

people gain momentum (strength) when they bask in the joy that God's forgiveness brings. Are worship times in your church times of celebrating the joy we have in the Lord?

**Obedience to God's Command (Neh. 8:13-17).** After this great celebration the people gathered before Ezra to hear more instruction from the law of God. During this time Ezra explained to them God's command concerning the observance of the Feast of Booths. Because it was the season for this feast, straightway the people initiated this celebration. They fashioned huts of tree branches on their flat roofs and in their courtyards. As a result of their obedience to the law of God, there was great rejoicing in the land.

What a great lesson this is for you and me. Obedience to God brings great joy. Whenever God's people obey him, celebration that glorifies God can occur—even on Sunday night!

**Reading God's Word (Neh. 8:18).** Ezra read the book of the law daily to the people throughout the days of the feast. On the eighth day there was a "solemn assembly." The "solemn assembly" was a more intense time of fasting, praying, and seeking God's will. Thus, through obedience and the daily reading of God's word, the people entered into a deeper experience with God.

Are you longing for a deeper relationship with God? Then heed this lesson from Nehemiah. Spend time reading God's word daily, and do as it commands.

Our short survey of the Old Testament has uncovered many truths, but none more valuable than this one: When God's people come face to face with their sin, repent, and perform acts of obedience, the Lord restores the relationship with them and gives them reason for joy.

McBride is pastor, Kittiwake Church, Pass Christian.

## FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

### A new heaven and earth

Revelation 21:1-7, 22-27

By Paul Blanchard

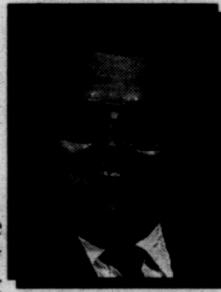
The greatest event of our lifetime will occur after our lifetime. That is the day when we leave this life and enter into heaven to forever be with Jesus. The new heaven and new earth will have a holy city in which God dwells with his people and takes away all that blights earthly life. God, who began all things, will bring his purpose to a consummation. The new Jerusalem is the dwelling place throughout eternity for the saints of all ages and fulfills the hope of Abraham for the heavenly city.

The heavenly city is a city of beauty. Revelation 21:2 states,

"And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." On their wedding day, all brides are beautiful. John says that the holy city is as beautiful a bride prepared for the wedding.

The Apostle Paul states in 1 Corinthians 2:9, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." I can't help but believe that the Apostle Paul knew of the beauty of heaven.

In verse 18, John states,



Blanchard

gates are twelve pearls. He states that the streets of the city were pure gold, like it was transparent glass. What we think is valuable down here (gold) they will pave streets with in heaven!

Also, heaven is for all of those who know Jesus as Savior and Lord. God states, "I will be his God, and he shall be my son." Do you know Jesus as your own personal Savior? He is the only way to heaven. Can you say that you know for certain that you will go to heaven when you die? If there is some

"And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass." Is the wall like pure gold or is it like clear glass? The truth is that heaven is so beautiful we cannot describe it or even imagine how beautiful it really is! In verse 21, John states that the twelve

doubt, why not bow your head right now, and ask Jesus to forgive you and come into your life and be your Savior and Lord?

Another great fact of heaven is that God will be there with us. Verses 21-24 state that there is no need of a temple or sun, because the glory of God lightens it! The glory of God will be present with us. These promises are for those who are saved, and should encourage us to persevere. When difficult times come, when can look forward to the day when we will be with Jesus, in heaven. Someone once wrote:

"What a day that will be, when my Jesus I shall see,

When I look upon his face, the one who saved me by his grace,

When he takes me by the hand and leads me through the promised land,

What a day, glorious day that will be."

When the pressures of life seem to close in all around you, think of that day when Jesus will usher his own children into heaven with him for all eternity. God's children will enjoy total peace and security. There will be no thing that defiles there. The Bible says in Revelation 21:4, 27: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And there shall in no way enter into it anything that defileth, neither he that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they who are written in the Lamb's book of life." This fact of security ought to lead us to worship and praise God. God will take care of his own. He will provide all we need in heaven.

Blanchard is Director of Missions, Winston Association.



# African-Americans see missions upswing

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — "Why do we only have white missionaries coming to do missions?" Elliott Nichols heard Vincent, a young man from Rwanda, ask during a church service in Baltimore a few years ago. "Are there no black Christians?" he pleaded.



The Nicholises

facilitate the foreign mission appointment process for individuals and families such as the Nicholises.

"Shortly after I felt God calling me to ministry, (God) began to transform my heart about serving as a missionary," said Nichols, who had pursued the "American dream" of prosperity all his life.

As a subcontractor for maintenance and custodial work for 14 years in Alaska, he and his family lived comfortably and prosperously.

However, while attending New Hope Church, a mission-minded congregation in Anchorage, Nichols said God began to deal with him about getting personally involved in missions.

His wife had already responded to God's call to serve in full-time Christian ministry overseas, he said.

"(Patricia) was a big part of my being open to accept the call to missions myself," Nichols said.

"I thought I was crazy, but I felt God saying, 'Go to seminary,'" Nichols said of his decision in 1988 to move his family, which at the time included two young children, so he could begin preparing himself for ministry.

He first went to Morgan State University in Baltimore, where he completed a bachelor's degree in social work in

1993. While living in Maryland he met Cornelius at an FMB-sponsored Missions Fest.

"God brought David Cornelius into my path," said Nichols, who had been frustrated by numerous unfulfilled promises of other ministers who said they would help Nichols and his family in various ways.

"David Cornelius has never let me down," said Nichols, who is now in his third year of study at New Orleans Seminary and hopes to graduate by the end of 1997. "He has been a great source of encouragement to me and my family and has been very instrumental in helping us all along the way."

With his educational requirements nearly complete, Nichols also is concentrating on the FMB's ministry requirements.

For nearly two years, he has been pastor of an inner-city church in New Orleans' Westbank area, "gaining a much better perspective of ministry as a whole," he said.

He and his wife hope to be serving in Africa within the next two years.

Because of his children's ages when he first felt called to foreign mission service, he decided to take his time "and prepare the right way, not rush it," Nichols said.

The Nicholises' son and daughter, now 20 and 17,

couldn't be prouder of their parents.

While Tasha and Kenneth won't be moving to Africa with their mom and dad, Nichols hopes his children's Christian development has been strengthened as they have witnessed the process of yielding and then preparing for ministry.

They will never forget Vincent, though, who was killed two years ago in the Rwandan civil war.

As he sat in their home in 1990, Vincent was amazed by the amenities of their house, from the table and chairs to pictures on the wall, and especially by the automatic dishwasher, not to mention the ice cream and ice cubes.

"You guys are so rich," Vincent told my family," Nichols said of a time when they had been feeling low from the pinch of college expenses and remembering the days of wealth in Alaska.

"His comments put our life into perspective quickly and have kept them there," Nichols said.

"Since that day and ever since then, on a scale of 1 to 10, I've been a 10 on trying to do what the Lord wanted me to do to prepare for ministry and not grumble about it.

"I want to be wherever the Lord wants me to be," Nichols said. "And I know that if the Lord has called us, he is going to take good care of us."

The emotional impact of Vincent's testimony has changed the course of Nichols' life.

Now preparing to serve as a foreign missionary somewhere in Africa with the Foreign Mission Board (FMB), Nichols is a student at New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS).

While he is working on a master of divinity degree, his wife, Patricia, is enrolled in the associate of Christian education degree program.

According to David Cornelius, director of African American relations for the FMB, the Nicholises are part of an increasing number of African-American Southern Baptists responding to God's call to foreign missions.

Cornelius was on the NOBTS campus in April to let African American students know of the variety of mission service opportunities available.

Before working in his current administrative position with the FMB, Cornelius served in Nigeria 10 years as a missionary.

In 1992 when he changed ministry roles, he was one of a total of three African-American foreign missionaries serving with the FMB.

The number now stands at eight, and Cornelius added he senses a growing interest in foreign missions among African-Americans.

Cornelius now regularly visits churches, associations, colleges, and seminaries across the United States to develop an awareness among African Americans of foreign mission opportunities, as well as to

## Ala. Baptist school admits 'sin'

MOBILE, Ala. (BP) — "The University of Mobile has sinned as an institution," declared Robert Maxwell, chairman of the university's board of trustees. "We violated the 1994 agreement made with the Alabama Baptist State Convention. The institution did this, and we are guilty."

Maxwell made his comments to the State Board of Missions' executive committee May 15.

Two days earlier, university trustees meeting behind closed doors ousted Michael Magnoli as president of the Baptist-affiliated university.

In 1994, messengers to the annual Alabama Baptist state convention affirmed an agreement limiting financial support of the university's Latin American Branch Campus (LABC) in Nicaragua to gifts specifically generated for that campus and funds generated from that campus.

Another part of the agreement required trustees to return to the Mobile campus about \$2.3 million used to initiate the LABC.

Maxwell said the university violated both provisions of the agreement. When the current fiscal year ends on June 30, trustees expect Mobile investments in Nicaragua will have

grown by \$1 million to \$3,321,093.

Following the 1996 Alabama Baptist State Convention annual meeting, Steve Lee, director of finance, told "The Alabama Baptist" newsjournal the university had returned \$739,000 of the more than \$2.3 million owed. Now trustees say that was not true.

Walter Hovell, a trustee until he was appointed vice president of finance for the school on May 13, said, "Subsequent to the report dated June 30, 1996, it was observed that some of the (financial) entries prior to that date were not appropriate. They were changed back for the previous year."

Trustee Walter Hovell, former president of Mobile Gas Service Co., and Mike Johnson, vice president of the Bank of Mobile and university trustee, found these and other irregularities during a financial review the two conducted in April and early May.

The review began when Magnoli asked trustees to help solve what he called "a cash flow problem."

The study showed the university would need almost \$1.7 million to meet obligations through June 30, 1997.

Additional funds would be needed to get through July and August.

The review also found the university showed an operating deficit averaging about \$800,000 annually.

The shortfalls prevented the university from doing more than paying the interest on the mounting short-term debt, which had reached nearly \$5.5 million.

A \$2.2 million loan from AmSouth Bank in late April alleviated the short-term problems, Maxwell said.

He added that trustees are negotiating with a bank to restructure all of its short-term debt into a 15-year note.

However, since the restructure involves a second mortgage on property owned by the university, approval of messengers to the 1997 annual Alabama Baptist State Convention would be required. The convention meets Nov. 18-19 in Huntsville.

Magnoli, meanwhile, insisted to the end he had done nothing wrong.

He blamed the perilous financial conditions of the school on overruns on new construction.

"The top man always takes the blame and that is what is happening here," he said.

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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ZMW GCVB TVZIVW  
VAXVVWRMUSB, ZMW  
HZRW LMV GL ZMLGCVI,  
DCZG NZMMVI LT  
NZM RH GCRH, GCZG  
VEVM GCV DRMW ZMW  
GCV HVZ LJVB CRN?

NZIF TLOI: TLIGB-LMV

Clue: U equals G

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Twenty-One Twenty-eight.